



Workshop briefing note

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Committee Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga FMP Subcommittee
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Report to support Working Draft Volumes 1 and 2 of the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga Floodplain Management Plan

1. Purpose

To provide the Subcommittee with information required to provide input on the direction of the draft for Volumes 1 and 2 of the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga Floodplain Management Plan.

2. Background

Greater Wellington Regional Council is in the process of developing a floodplain management plan (FMP) for the Te Kāuru area. The Te Kāuru area covers the upper Ruamahanga catchment from the confluence of the Waiohine River to headwaters, including the tributary rivers (The Waingawa, Waipoua, Whangaehu, Kopuaranga, and Taueru Rivers).

The Te Kāuru Upper Ruamahanga FMP has been developed by in collaboration with Carterton District Council, Masterton District Council, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Ngāti Rangitāne o Wairarapa, and the wider community, primarily through this Subcommittee.

FMP development is typically split into three stages:

1. Investigation
2. Identify and assess management options
3. Prepare FMP and implementation

Stages 1 and 2 have been completed for the rural reaches; the 'Waipoua urban area' is currently in Stage 2.

Because of delays within the 'Waipoua urban area' programme, and the good progress made within the rural sections of the FMP, three volumes of the FMP

are being developed for consultation. The three volumes will be combined into a single document prior to the final round of consultation.

The contents of the three draft FMP volumes are:

- Volume 1 – Background and Overview (including Common Tools descriptions)
- Volume 2 – Reach Specific Responses FMP
- Volume 3 – Waipoua Urban Responses FMP.

The GWRC project team has incorporated inputs from the Subcommittee and developed working drafts of Volumes 1 and 2. Work on Stage 2 of the Waipoua Urban area is continuing, the option combination development stage will be re-assessed in 2017, and a working draft of Volume 3 will be presented to the Subcommittee in mid to late 2017.

3. Volume 1 and 2: Guidance and input from the Subcommittee

As members of the TKURFMP Subcommittee, we are seeking your feedback on the early version of the working drafts for Volumes 1 and 2 of the FMP. We are presenting these documents at this stage of the process to ensure we are reflecting the views of the Subcommittee and the Vision and Aims developed for this floodplain management plan.

There are some important details to know and remember while reading and providing feedback of these working drafts of Volume 1 and 2, these are outlined below.

Status of these working drafts

These documents are not complete. This is the first time that all of the concepts and ideas that have been developed by the Subcommittee and the project team have been brought into one document. There are many areas that require further development or completion. Please treat these documents as ‘working drafts’. We are seeking your inputs and feedback to help guide the progress of developing a draft for consultation in 2017.

Waipoua reach specific responses

The Waipoua urban reach (Reach 13) is not included in Volume 2, as discussed above.

Within Waipoua reaches 9-12 reach specific responses to individual issues (other than major project responses) have not been included in this version of the working draft FMP. This is because the Waipoua River has not been specifically considered by the Subcommittee. Reach 9 (Waipoua Headwaters) does not have specific issues. However, Reaches 10, 11, and 12 have some

issues that may require a reach specific response. GRWC officers are happy to prepare these responses on behalf of the Subcommittee if required.

The major project responses within the Waipoua River were mentioned at the Subcommittee meeting in September 2016 by David Hopman. It was agreed that GWRC and MDC would work together to develop these responses, which are included in Volume 2.

Other notable sections under development

There will be some on-going work within these documents where concepts and links are still being finalised, and aligned with other Flood Protection department projects. Terminology needs to be standardised and aligned. While there is some work to be completed around how these are best portrayed, the concepts will remain the same.

Within the FMP, there are three options included for the Rathkeale stopbank. These options are still to be discussed and developed with Rathkeale. The costs for these options are still to be assessed. Only one option will be presented in future versions of this document.

Within 'Appendix 01 - Issues', currently only 'High' and 'Moderate' issues have been addressed, 'Low to moderate' and 'Low' issues will be individually assessed over summer and added to the appendix. Site visits will be undertaken where necessary.

Several diagrams and maps are still to be 'professionally' produced, in particular in Volume 1, also the major project responses. We are also considering getting some additional photography done and would be interested in your comments as to whether this is necessary and if so, suggestions of locations that would best illustrate the FMP.

Funding approaches for many responses are yet to be developed or needs to be developed further, including recognition private land for buffer use.

Distribution of the FMP

You are welcome to discuss the concepts and issues within this working draft FMP with others; however we would appreciate it if you did not circulate the document itself. We are aware this version of the document could be taken out of context, i.e. it could be considered a 'fait accompli' when it is not.

The public consultation process will be undertaken in early 2017 after incorporating feedback from the Subcommittee, and amendments from the GWRC project team. Input from MDC and CDC will also be sought. Endorsement of the content of the draft FMP will be required from the TKURFMP Subcommittee, MDC and CDC prior to public consultation.

GWRC will not finalise the TKURFMP without community support.

Required feedback

We are seeking your input and comment on:

- How well does the FMP align with the Vision and Aims that the Subcommittee developed? (Listed in Volume 1)
- Does the FMP reflect the outcomes of the workshops and meetings held by the Subcommittee?
- What is your view of the key messages in the document? Are they clear?
- How do you feel about the layout and structure of the document?
- Are professional photos necessary? Where would you suggest to best illustrate the FMP?
- Anything else you wish to comment on.

You will then have a chance to discuss the working drafts Volume 1 and 2 with the Subcommittee and the project team at a workshop on 7 February 2016. We would appreciate your feedback prior to the workshop if possible.

Feedback prior to the workshop can be given by: return of hard copy or in a bullet format in an email to Francie.Morrow@gw.govt.nz. A pdf of the documents can be provided on request.

4. Key messages

There are several key messages within the Te Kāuru Upper Ruamāhanga FMP that will need to be communicated with our partners, key stakeholders, and the wider community. It is important that the Subcommittee understand these key messages and ensure they are reflected in the FMP. They will form the basis of public consultation in 2017, once we have endorsement from the Subcommittee, MDC and CDC.

The FMP seeks to strike a balance between the different values in each reach and the benefits of allowing the river to behave more naturally versus the benefits of controlling the river's behaviour to manage flooding and erosion problems.

a) Change to the status quo

The TKURFMP proposes changes to the 'status quo'. The TKURFMP process has highlighted the need find a balance between different types of values. Rather than an economically driven process, the need to find balance between environmental, ecological, cultural, and economic values has been recognised and addressed.

There are aspects within the FMP that will be of particular interest to stakeholders, including impacts on private property with respect to use of the

river edge envelopes. The TKURFMP is suggesting a shift to a functional design fairway system. This is further discussed in point 'b' below.

b) Allowing the river to migrate within the river management envelope

An approach of 'giving the river more space to carry out its natural processes' is being proposed in the FMP. This approach was discussed and agreed with the Subcommittee at a workshop earlier this year.

This form of management approach aims to recognise the balance between improving the natural form of the river, and the resulting environmental benefits while providing certainty for landowners regarding the outer management line.

Riverside landowners will get a level of protection from river erosion outside of the river management area but will be encouraged to accept erosion of land within the river management area from time to time.

c) Vegetated buffers

To mitigate against erosion, a vegetated buffer between the active channel and the outer extent of the management area is recommended for implementation. This buffer area already exists in many locations but needs to be developed in a more consistent manner within the catchment to allow the proposed approach to work successfully. The channel will be kept relatively clear of vegetation to ensure flow capacity is maintained.

To be successful a consistent approach needs to be taken although exceptions to the rule will be applied when justified, such as:

- When a higher level of service is defined in the FMP (e.g. protection of critical assets); or
- When planting cannot successfully be implemented (e.g. where steep river banks exist or where the power of the river prevents establishment); or
- When buffer vegetation is not required (e.g. natural rock outcrops); or
- Inside bends that have no recent history of erosion.

Opportunities will also be taken to introduce a more diverse approach to planting vegetation. In low erosion risk areas native planting may be adopted or it may be left in pasture.

d) Intervention

Machines will still be required to undertake work in the river, when the appropriate criteria are met, but improved practices will be employed to minimise impacts.

Interventions to realign the river channel will generally take place under certain criteria outlined in the FMP.

e) Retirement and abandonment of some rural stopbanks

Part of the FMP process includes identifying assets, in particular stopbanks that may require abandonment in the future. There are 21 stopbanks identified in the FMP, four of which include direction from the FMP for long term exploration of partial abandonment. These are generally rural stopbanks that are located within the buffer zone.

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